

2009



# WOMACK ARMY MEDICAL CENTER

*Growing with Fort Bragg and our communities*

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SPECIAL ADVERTISING SUPPLEMENT



Dear Readers:

It is an exciting time for Fayetteville, Fort Bragg, and for Womack Army Medical Center. It is my pleasure to reach out to the Fayetteville community and share exciting news of growth and innovation. Womack Army Medical Center provides direct healthcare services to over 117,000 TRICARE enrolled beneficiaries who live on Fort Bragg

and in the eight county area surrounding the installation. Primarily, Womack serves the over 50,000 active duty Soldiers of the XVIII Airborne Corps, the 82nd Airborne Division, the Theater Sustainment Command and the U.S. Army Special Operations Command. Our mission is to provide direct support to deploying units and is essential to the Soldier's welfare – both before and after deployments. In addition, our healthcare services extend beyond our Soldiers and include their families, retirees and their families. Through our partners in the healthcare network, TRICARE benefits are extended to over 200,000 eligible beneficiaries in the area. Moreover, Womack Army Medical Center provides an invaluable resource that is integral to regional and national response plans during times of crisis. The Soldiers, civilians, contract employees and volunteers that comprise the WAMC team appreciate being part of such a vibrant community.

Just as Fayetteville is growing, Womack Army Medical Center is expanding facilities, professional staff, and innovative services. We plan to add three new residency programs over the next few years.

These include: Integrated General Surgery Residency, Obstetrics and Gynecology Residency, Optometry Residency and Family Medicine Obstetrics Fellowship. We have upgraded our Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) equipment to offer our patients faster, more in-depth and better quality images. In collaboration with Duke University Medical Center, we are able to offer our pregnant patients an opportunity to donate their umbilical cord blood to the Carolinas Cord Blood Bank. We broke ground for a new Blood Donor Center that will open next summer. We are also modifying our Emergency Department to have the capability to accommodate more patients. We are expanding Robinson Health Clinic to better serve our patient population for the 82nd Airborne Division. In the near future, we will have an outpatient behavioral health facility co-located with Social Work Services to offer our Soldiers and Families easier access to those services. In addition, we will add a Warrior Transition Complex for our Soldiers assigned to the Warrior Transition Battalion. Also in our plan is to add another primary care clinic to serve Pope Air Force Base and Forces Command. Truly, our organization is growing in support of those servicemen and women, their families and retirees who call Fort Bragg and the surrounding community their home.

We hope you enjoy this publication and find this information useful. We are indeed committed to those we serve.

Sincerely,

Nadja Y. West  
Colonel, U.S. Army Commanding

## BRAC/Army Transformation **Medical Support**

DEBBIE FARMER

Womack Army Medical Center began planning for an expected increase in its beneficiary population with the announcement of the 2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment (BRAC) recommendations.

When it is all over, Womack is expected to increase by approximately 20,386 beneficiaries. Womack has experienced a growth of approximately 11,519 beneficiaries since 2006 and anticipates an additional growth of approximately 8,867 beneficiaries between now and 2013. Womack currently provides healthcare to over 117,000 TRICARE enrolled beneficiaries. Primary care services include Active Duty sick call, urgent, routine, and wellness care to TRICARE Prime enrollees at Womack Family Medicine Residency Clinic, the Acute Minor Illness Clinic, and three large satellite clinics. Womack is committed to making the impact on our beneficiaries as seamless as possible. Numerous processes have been implemented to facilitate

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planning for the increased healthcare and access to care mission, space limitations, staffing shortages, and emergency services and preventive medicine missions. Womack and Pope Air Force Base Health Clinic are partnering with each other to ensure that the Air Force population remaining on Fort Bragg continues to receive quality and timely healthcare and provide a unified environment for both services.

Womack is partnering with community organizations to ensure regional primary and specialty healthcare is available for its beneficiaries. Recruiting and retention strategies are a prime focus of these work groups as the region experiences an unprecedented growth and limited local resources. In addition, WAMC is requesting assistance from its higher headquarters in providing additional military providers and assistance in civilian recruiting efforts. Womack staff has participated in numerous local, state, and national job fairs to educate potential providers about employment opportunities within the military medical healthcare system for civilian providers.

*continued on next page*

# State-of-the-art Technology

## Magnetic Resonance Imaging

### PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

Womack Army Medical Center is adding a 3 Tesla (3T) magnet to our Department of Radiology. “This new system will allow us to see the same number of patients as the 1.5 Tesla magnet but with better anatomical detail and resolution. Specifically, it allows better imaging of small parts of the body such as the wrist, hands, feet and digits,” said LTC Ken Griggs, chief of radiology at Womack. “We also have a state of the art body coil that will allow us greater functionality in abdominal imaging,” he added.

“The MRI 750 high definition magnet will greatly improve our ability to see abnormalities and to diagnose patients,” said LTC Griggs. The new 3T is a much more powerful magnet. Although it will greatly increase Womack’s ability to diagnose disease, patient safety is key with this new system. “Our MRI staff will be even more diligent in interviewing patients prior to undergoing a scan because the new MRI magnet is so powerful. Some items that are safe for scanning at 1.5T have not been tested at 3T,” said Kirk Bobbitt, lead technologist for the MRI section at Womack.

“The reason the Army approved the 3T equipment is its ability to



BOB MASON, MRI TECHNOLOGIST PREPARES A PATIENT FOR AN EXAM.

perform ‘functional MRI’ of the brain for traumatic injuries which is an emerging modality to evaluate brain injury. Womack has a dedicated Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) clinic and is the TBI center for the Southeast,” said Griggs.

“This is a really big deal for Womack to be one of four military installations in the Department of Defense to have this equipment,” said Bill Amerson, with General Electric. “For me, as a veteran, it is really important for our Soldiers and their families to have this technology available to them. They deserve the very best,” added Amerson.

Primary care providers will continue to provide a referral to Radiology as in the past.

Womack radiologists will determine which exams are performed on the 3T system. Usually, any small joint scanning, exams requiring thin brain slices, and musculoskeletal imaging will be done on the new GE 3T 750 HD magnet. The MRI section runs 24 hours per day, 7 days per week and up to fifty patients are seen daily.

A MRI may take from 20-60 minutes for the scan. Patients usually receive their results in two to three days.

Next Summer, Womack will offer digital mammography for our patients and hopefully breast MRI will be available soon after that.

*from previous page*

Four major medical military construction projects have been identified in support of BRAC. An addition to the Roscoe Robinson Health Clinic, which serves the 82nd Airborne Division, is under construction and will be completed shortly. Construction of a new consolidated health clinic is projected to be complete by 2012. The new clinic will provide healthcare services to the remaining Air Force population, the United States Forces Command Headquarters, and the United States Army Reserve Command. A new Behavioral Health Clinic will also begin construction next year and will provide increased behavioral health services. Currently, the Department of Emergency Medicine is undergoing an expansion project that will provide seven additional critical care beds to improve access for emergency medical services.

Military Emergency Medical Services (EMS) support is located at a temporary facility in Linden Oaks Military Housing Development. This service began in August. A new permanent facility for fire, police, and EMS is expected to be completed by September 2010. Linden Oaks Housing is a 1,100 acre development, located approximately 12 miles from Fort Bragg, and was built to accommodate the increased growth in Army families. Womack’s growth is expected to increase approximately by 23 percent by 2013. Womack continues to plan for additional resources in the form of personnel, construction projects, and infrastructure to accommodate the growth and to continue to provide accessible and quality healthcare to Soldiers and Families. Womack extends a warm welcome to our new beneficiaries and is committed to provide quality services to those we serve and the home of America’s finest!

# Coming Soon!

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1697810ET

# Fort Bragg Blood Donor Center

LINDA ELLERBE

Fort Bragg is set to open a new donor center next summer. The new blood donor center will be located at Souter and Woodruff streets on Fort Bragg. The plans for the \$5 million construction call for a 12,000 square foot state of the art facility for blood donation, processing, testing, storage and distribution as well as related support functions. The expected opening date is June 2010.

Captain Aleksey Casco, Fort Bragg Blood Donor Center chief said, “the building’s floor plan and workflow is designed specifically for the many different processes in collecting, separating and storing blood products. It will allow us to do our mission more effectively and collect blood products that will benefit Fort Bragg, other regional hospitals and the war effort. It is long overdue to have a facility that is designed specifically for blood donor operations.”

The Fort Bragg Blood Donor Center is a part of the Armed Services Blood Program made up of 22 blood donor centers worldwide tasked with collecting blood from the military community that is for the military community—providing a connection between those who give and the sick and injured who need their help. Though there are civilian agencies that also collect and process blood, the Armed Services Blood Program is the only one operated by the military to meet military blood needs. Those who donate blood through the Armed Services Blood Program directly support their friends in need at military medical treatment facilities at home and troops deployed worldwide.

One of the greatest strengths of our military is the way service members and their families take care of one another. The Fort Bragg Blood Donor Center provides an excellent way for military members and their families to show their support for one another in a concrete, meaningful way. Giving blood to the Fort Bragg Blood Donor Center allows you to be there for friends, neighbors and comrades-in-arms when they need you the most.

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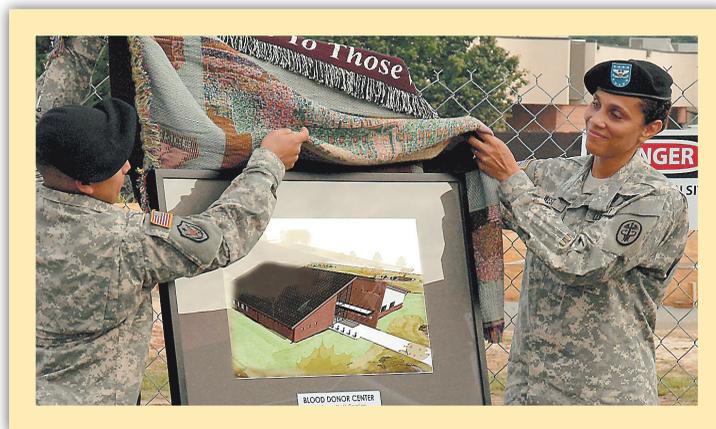
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PHOTOS BY JOE. E. HARLAN  
 COL NADJA WEST AND CPT ALEKSEY CASCO-FIGUEROA UNVEIL  
 THE PHOTO OF THE BLOOD DONOR CENTER ON AUGUST 31ST.



PHOTO BY JOE. E. HARLAN  
TARA GREEN AND BABY NAOMI. NAOMI  
WAS THE FIRST BABY BORN IN 2009 AT  
WOMACK ARMY MEDICAL CENTER.

## Making Families A Reality

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

For the past four years, LTC Jason Parker and his team have been helping couples fulfill their dreams.

Take the Air Force family of William and Gretchen Wester. Gretchen has two children. Ryan was conceived naturally and her other son, Gareth was conceived with fertility treatments. She has been undergoing fertility treatment for ten years. She has been a patient of his since August of 2005 in between LTC Parker's and her husband's deployments. Gretchen became pregnant but it was an ectopic pregnancy that was diagnosed in 2008. At that point, Gretchen decided it was time to stop trying to get pregnant. She withdrew her name from the patients treated at the clinic. Shortly after that decision, she changed her mind and decided to go back to the clinic. With LTC Parker's help, she is now pregnant with triplets. She is due November 30th and they have already picked out names. The triplets are Amanda Shay, Annalisa Kaye and Kenan Jefferson. Kenan Jefferson is named after an Airmen, TSGT William Jefferson, who died in March of 2008 in Afghanistan and served with her husband. When asked how she feels, Gretchen responded by saying "she feels a little overwhelmed about being a mom of five. We are really excited and feel blessed to add the triplets to our family." Gretchen also added "if patients want to try fertility treatment, don't wait and most importantly, educate yourself."

As the Chief of Reproductive Endocrinology and Infertility (REI) clinic at Womack Army Medical Center, Parker is a member of a very select group of doctors nationwide. About 25 doctors graduate from one of about 20 REI Fellowship programs each year, and Parker is currently one of only six active duty REI practitioners in the Army.

"Since there are so few REI doctors, it had been difficult for patients to see a REI Specialist and often patients had to travel a long distance to be seen. Senior leadership felt it was important to bring these

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# Share a miracle with someone who needs your help!

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

Womack Army Medical Center recently began to offer cord blood donation services for mothers who deliver their babies at Womack. The program is a partnership with the Carolinas Cord Blood Bank based at Duke University Medical Center, a public cord bank that is part of the National Marrow Donor Program's Network of public cord banks.

Fort Bragg is home to about 10 percent of all active duty Army forces in the country. Womack Army Medical Center delivers approximately 270 babies per month or just over 3,000 births per year. "Years ago, we used to throw cord blood away. Today, we realize that what we once threw out can save someone's life," said Dr. Sammy Choi, Director of Research at Womack. "We are proud to be leading this effort for Fort Bragg and Womack Army Medical Center."

Cord blood is blood collected from the umbilical cord and placenta after a baby is born. It is rich in blood forming cells that can be used in transplants to save lives of patients with leukemia, lymphoma and other diseases. Since these diseases affect all races, the ethnic diversity of Fort Bragg will be a blessing for those patients who could benefit from this treatment.



PHOTO BY JOE. E. HARLAN

SHAY PURLEY, RN (LEFT) AND CHRISTINA CERVANTES, RN WORK ON A PATIENT IN THE NICU.

"Cord blood donation is voluntary, confidential and available at no cost to the donors," said COL Paul Whitecar, MD, Chief of Maternal Fetal Medicine. "At Womack, expectant mothers will receive information about the services several weeks before their scheduled due date so they can learn if they are eligible to donate and make a decision. Trained collectors from Duke will be available at Womack from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Monday through Friday," Whitecar added. In the future, Womack would like to offer this service around the clock for our patients. Carolinas Cord Blood Bank opened in 1998 and works with six other hospitals across the state in coordinating cord blood

donation. Current collection hospitals include Duke Hospital, Durham Regional Hospital, UNC Hospital, Rex Hospital, Western Wake Hospital and Women's Hospital of Greensboro.

Donating cord blood is a safe procedure that will not harm the mother or the baby in any way. The blood is collected after the baby is born. Then it is delivered to the Carolinas Cord Blood Bank where it is tested, frozen and stored and made available to patients who need a cord blood or marrow transplant through the National Marrow Donor Program's Be the Match Registry.

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services to the patients rather than make the patients travel great distances to see these providers," said Parker. "I want people to know that we are here and want to help." It is help that is sorely needed.

According to Parker, about 15 percent of men and women suffer from infertility. He added that, among that number, infertility is evenly divided between the two, while in as many as 20 percent of couples unable to conceive, both the man and woman suffer from this disease. With an overall scarcity of REI doctors, especially among military providers, Parker is excited to be offering his services at Fort Bragg, which boasts the largest Soldier population of any Army base.

The good news, said Parker, is that nearly 90 percent of infertility cases can be successfully treated with a variety of medications and conventional surgery.

"Most patients who come to see me are very well educated on their situation and come in to find out just what is within their power to make this happen," he said. "For most, treatment usually begins within a month of a patient coming to see me and we can usually help them achieve conception in as little as four to six months."

He said that the need for his services is so great we receive referrals from all over the U.S. and from as far away as Germany, Korea, Guam and Thailand. However, it is the Fort Bragg community with which he has the greatest connection and it is here that he most wants to get the word out about

all that he can offer. In addition to the number of referrals we have from around the world we are also caring for a number of soldiers with injuries from Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) and are offering them the opportunities to have families where their current medical condition would preclude this.

It is important to realize that although Parker and his team want to help couples get pregnant, we don't want them to become "too pregnant." It is very important to realize that we want couples to have one baby at a time and try not to cause twins and triplets. The complications that can arise for the multiple order births can cause lifelong complications to mother and infants and as a result the REI clinic has had very few sets of triplets and plenty of twins! We are grateful to have a very robust Maternal Fetal Medicine clinic and an excellent Neo-natal intensive care unit staff and Perinatologist that provide all the care to the mother and growing fetuses and infants once the patients become pregnant.

Parker knows first hand of the importance of his work, as he and his wife Shawna are the proud parents of seven children (three of them are a set of spontaneous triplets).

"The one thing that I don't want to see happen is any couple being frustrated, having to travel a long distance or waiting for a long time to get a referral and to be seen, which is why I'm here," he said. "Helping couples have families always brings me joy because having a family is the reason most people become couples."

To schedule an appointment with the REI clinic, call 910-907-9270.

# Web Site Makes Finding Medical Jobs Easier

MARCIA CARROTHERS, CH, CIVILIAN PERSONNEL BRANCH  
DIRECTORATE OF BUSINESS OPERATIONS

Finding that perfect new job in the Federal government at Womack Army Medical Center opens opportunities for a myriad of questions:

Where can I search for job vacancy announcements? How do I apply? What information is necessary to include in my resume? Is there anyone who can help me? Fortunately, there is someone who can help guide you in the right direction.

According to Marcia Carrothers, Chief, Civilian Personnel Branch, located at Womack Army Medical Center, obtaining a Federal position, including one at the medical center, may not be as difficult a process as one may think. There are online resources that applicants can access to apply for Federal job opportunities. The two most popular online website resources are located at [www.cpol.army.mil](http://www.cpol.army.mil), the official U.S. Army Civilian Personnel site that lists Federal government civilian vacant positions specific to the Army. The other official Federal government website, [www.usajobs.opm.gov](http://www.usajobs.opm.gov), is run similar to the Army website, with the exception that job vacancies are posted from other Federal agencies to include, but not limited to, the Veteran's Administration, Department of Homeland Security, NASA, Federal Park Services .

The benefit of both websites is their speed and range. With the click of a button, you can view job announcements for basically any destination of choice, and apply for the vacancy immediately.



EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT STAFF: CORRINE LEWIS, LESLIE HORNE, SGT MARC GROTE, DR. VICKI LANIER, JENNIE TOROLA AND COL (DR.) FRANK CHRISTOPHER M.D.

On average, Womack Army Medical Center alone has approximately 100 vacancies on any given day. Of those vacant positions, approximately 1/3 of those vacancies are critical to the medical center mission, and difficult to fill. Competition with other healthcare facilities in and around the area is a contributor in being unable to locate the unique skill sets necessary for employment in the medical field. Advertising is also a key factor when trying to attract those applicants. Steps are taken to ensure that advertising includes radio spots, local television ads, medical journal articles, local and state-wide newspapers, online announcements,

both within and outside of the immediate area.

Additionally, organized Career Job Fairs are held onsite and civilian personnel recruiters attend area college and university career fairs to provide benefits of working for the federal government and in this area. Benefits for potential new employees include sign-on bonuses, relocation assistance and tuition assistance for specialty programs. Retirement plans, 401k, health insurance, paid vacation and sick leave, paid holidays, are just a few additional great benefits to consider when seeking employment in the Federal government.

*If you would like more information or are interested in obtaining employment with Womack Army Medical Center, please contact the Civilian Personnel Branch, Womack Army Medical Center, at (910) 907-6107.*

**Join our integrated health team! Got to [www.cpol.army.mil](http://www.cpol.army.mil) or [usajobs.opm.gov](http://usajobs.opm.gov).**

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LTC (P) Georgina Murray, Chief of Pathology, Womack Army Medical Center said, "without the blood products from this center, surgeons wouldn't be able to do their work to save lives here at home and overseas."

Donors from all Services, government employees, retirees, government contractors and military family members are eligible to help others in the military community by donating blood to the Fort Bragg Blood Donor

Center. Most healthy adults are eligible to give blood, although travel to certain areas, some medical conditions and medications may temporarily or permanently restrict donation. The center is currently located in Bldg 8-2809 Scott Street; the hours of operation are 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. For more information on eligibility contact Fort Bragg Blood Donor Center at 910-396-9925 or visit the ASBP Web site at [www.militaryblood.dod.mil](http://www.militaryblood.dod.mil) for more information.

Please support our troops. Give blood.

## Refill Pharmacy Moves

PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

Womack's refill distribution center will move mid November to a temporary building on Glider Street on Fort Bragg in building #8-3846. The new temporary refill site will be housed here until

the new building is constructed. The refill pharmacy serves patients that call in refills or use our internet web site to order refills. The building is handicap accessible and is located near the North Post Exchange. The refill pharmacy is open for Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and on Saturdays from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The refill pharmacy is closed on Sundays and on federal holidays. To refill your prescription, please call 910-907-7676 or log onto [www.wamc@amedd.army.mil](http://www.wamc@amedd.army.mil).

# Saving Time, Saving Lives: The Networked Hospital

DR. CRISTÓBAL S. BERRY-CABÁN

**D**r. Robert Gauer, MD, has been practicing medicine for ten years at Womack Army Medical Center. One day this past summer, an overweight retired veteran was a patient in the hospital and Dr. Gauer made a decision that could have seriously harmed his patient. Dr. Gauer selected the medication, sibutramine, a drug that helps you lose weight, to prescribe for the patient. He entered the prescription into his office computer. The medication order was sent electronically to the hospital's drug-order entry system. Almost immediately, he received an alert message warning him the drug could interact dangerously with an anti-depressant the patient was already prescribed. "There's no way I would have picked up on that unless the electronic system was in place," Dr. Gauer says.

Scenarios like this unfold every day at Womack Army Medical Center, providing a sobering visual of the role that information technology plays in transforming health care. Womack is one of the Army's most aggressive users of new technologies. Millions of dollars in technology investments have been made in Womack Army Medical Center and our outlying clinics.

Physicians can log onto an internal web site to examine X-rays and laboratory results from a computer from any location in the facility. In addition, providers have the ability to access X-rays and lab results from their own home through a virtual private network system.

For years, hospitals missed out on the information technology revolution that was embraced by the rest of the economy. Womack began changing fifteen years ago and accelerated with the opening of the new Hospital in 2000. Sluggish, first-generation computer systems were tossed out. Womack listened to their healthcare professionals and issued laptops, installed software and fine-tuned network technologies to their work rhythms.

The results can be seen in the statistics. Quality of patient care is beginning to increase. Patient deaths are down. At the same time, productivity is rising. There is no doubt that the technology investments the hospital has made are making a difference. "We could never become one of the Army's top hospitals unless we spend time and effort in investing in new technology to support our patients as well as healthcare providers," says LTC David Broyhill, Womack's Chief Information Officer.

The most important piece of Womack's digital initiatives is the networked software that acts as the hospital's central nervous system. Nurses use wireless laptops on carts to log in to this system to record patients' symptoms and get all the information they need for patients during their stay in the hospital. Physicians can log into the network via wireless laptops or personal computers to order prescriptions and lab tests. Nearly everything is linked into the system, from the automated pharmacy



MAJ (DR.) KYLE WALKER, D.O., READS X-RAYS.

to the X-ray room, reducing the need for older technology like faxes, phone calls and other administrative procedures.

Making the technology work takes a combined effort of the administrative and medical center staff. Womack's computer software systems are constantly being upgraded to ensure the medical staff is part of the process.

Doctors and nurses now use voice recognition technology, DragonSpeak, to interpret and dictate their notes by speaking, and all mobile

devices are tagged with a specialized tracking system that allows staff to locate available mobile equipment anywhere within the facility. These systems are part of the transition to Womack's platform for the future with electronic health records, with increased access on handheld devices and smart phones, making for a more mobile and effective healthcare workforce.

Technology also affects the way the hospital interacts with patients. When the new flu virus of swine origin (H1N1) that first caused illness in Mexico and the United States in March and April, Womack responded immediately by setting up a hotline—910-907-SFLU. This was possible because Womack's phone system is run through the computer system. This advanced phone system also has the ability to automatically call patients to inform them of upcoming appointments and services.

Hospitals are no strangers to the value of technology. Collectively, they spend billions of dollars annually on advanced diagnostic and treatment equipment. Until recently, information technology was limited to administrative and financial applications. Womack is in the forefront of using this digital transformation, harnessing cutting-edge technology to save lives.

Womack has quickly moved from an environment dominated by handwritten notes and physician orders to an environment in which staff use information systems to document patient records as well as enter and process orders. These records are now shared with the Veterans Administration hospital.

The story of Womack is not finished. As LTC Broyhill points out, "Technology is an enabler, it enables an organization to solve a problem or satisfy a need. There are many technologies available, but the key essence is how to use the technologies to design a solution which is strategic, robust, scalable and business driven". The reality is that bringing new technology into any large organization is a challenge. Womack will continue to take the lead and move forward with the ultimate goal being an integrated system where hospitals around the globe will be networked together to save lives.

*Dr. Cristóbal S. Berry-Cabán, is a clinical statistician in the Informatics Branch at Womack Army Medical Center.*